



The Yarmouth Isle of Wight Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Yarmouth Town Council held at CHOYD Tuesday 9th January 2024 at 6:30pm

PRESENT: Councillors D McCleary (Mayor), G Head (Deputy Mayor), S Cowley, A Ingram, P Cronin, P Farrell, P Spink.

IN ATTENDANCE: B Jacobs (Town Clerk), Martyn Collinson (Chairman YTT) and 7 members of the public

141/2023 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Adams, Cllr T Cowley and for delayed arrival from Cllr P Spink

142/2023 PUBLIC FORUM:

i) HARBOUR ISSUES

In the absence of a Commissioner, the Clerk read out the following report from YHC:

Visitor traffic: *The number of boats visiting the Harbour for an overnight stay in 2023 amounts to 15,907. This is a decrease on the previous year of 1,710 visits. This is thought to be due to inclement weather through the height of the summer season. Short stay, or lunch time traffic remained stable at 6,494 visits from this sector of the industry.*

Harbour Works:

Dredging: *The harbour conducted the annual bathymetric survey of the estuary to determine any requirement for a dredge campaign. The survey showed that a light dredge will be necessary to maintain safe, navigational channels therefore, dredging will commence on the last two weeks of February. A post dredge survey will be conducted and published on the successful completion of the works.*

Anderson boat cruises (Quay 2 Quay Ltd): *Quay 2 Quay Ltd plan to introduce a passenger ferry service sometime in April, running up to 13 trips per day annually between Lymington and Yarmouth. A total of 112 passengers can be carried onboard at any given time.*

Yarmouth Harbour (a Statutory Harbour Authority) maintains an open port duty. Section 3.5 of the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) states" Almost all harbour

authority's statutory powers are subject to what is known as the 'open port duty'. This means that the harbour, dock, or pier must be open to anyone for the shipping and unshipping of goods and the embarking and landing of passengers, on payment of the rates and other conditions set by the local legislation for that port..."

Section 5 of the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) requires that any Port or Harbour in the UK is to "...ensure that marine risks are formally assessed and are eliminated or reduced to the lowest possible level, so far as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with good practice..."

The Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations (GtGP) stresses "...the importance of using consultation during the risk assessment process..." and recognises that ".....Risks and the impact of identified outcomes should normally be assessed against four criteria.

the consequence to:

- *PS - life (public safety).*
- *EN - the environment.*
- *AS - harbour infrastructure (asset).*
- *HB - harbour and harbour user operations (business, reputation etc).*

The possible planned introduction by Quay 2 Quay Ltd. of a 15m (Length over all) passenger ferry/pleasure cruise vessel for up to 13 trips per day annually, 20 trips per day annually if operating a 2-vessel service will require such an exercise. Therefore, Mark Robinson Marine Consultants (MRMC) have been commissioned to undertake a formal assessment of risk to determine whether the operation meets the above forementioned criteria. As an important stakeholder the YTC are invited to comment on the risk assessments produced by MRMC as part of the consultation process. The documentation has been made available through your Yarmouth Harbour Advisory Committee representative.

ii) YARMOUTH TOWN TRUST

1) Town Trust Clerk: Our new Clerk, Anne Dines, is now fully in place and the handover from the previous Clerk is complete. Email and phone contact numbers remain unchanged.

2) Town Hall: Wight Stonemasonry together with Southern Lights have now restored the Town Hall windows. The schedule for hiring the ground floor is being completed at the moment and will be circulated shortly to the outfits concerned by the end of the year informing them of the slots they have been successful in obtaining.

3) Memorial Benches: One bench still need attention – we are in touch with the Family.

4) Mill Terrace Cottage: No 12 now has a new Tenant – David Porter. A maintenance schedule of all remedial work required on the cottages in the next 2 years is currently being prepared and costed in order to be included in Next Year's budget.

5) Financials: Filing of last year's accounts is still delayed due to recent changes and an entirely new form being imposed on us. We expect them to be uploaded in December.

6) Recreation Ground: We have received a proposal from Bradbury Sheds to put a small pavilion at the top of the Rec Ground. This will be analysed and discussed going forward.

iii) ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

As Cllr Spink was delayed, the Clerk read out the following report:

1. *I have written once again to the IoW Council re Parking on the Green.*

2. **Neighbourhood Priority Statements (NPS):** *I was asked, at the last meeting of YTC, to find out a little more NPS. This is a new concept introduced by the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURB). The Act states as follows:*

Neighbourhood priorities statements: Any qualifying body may make a statement, to be known as a "neighbourhood priorities statement", which summarises what the body considers to be the principal needs and prevailing views, of the community in the neighbourhood area in relation to which the body is authorised, in respect of local matters. "Local matters" are such matters as the Secretary of State may prescribe, relating to—

(a) development, or the management or use of land, in or affecting the neighbourhood area,

(b) housing in the neighbourhood area,

(c) the natural environment in the neighbourhood area,

(d) the economy in the neighbourhood area,

(e) public spaces in the neighbourhood area,

(f) the infrastructure, facilities or services available in the neighbourhood area, or

(g) other features of the neighbourhood area.

The notes say that the Bill introduces "a new neighbourhood planning tool called a 'neighbourhood priorities statement', providing communities with a simpler and more accessible way to set out their key priorities and preferences for their local areas. Local authorities will need to take these into account, where relevant, when preparing their local plans for the areas concerned, enabling more communities to better engage in the local plan-making process."

Planning solicitors, Manby- Bowdler, have commented "Neighbourhood Priority Statements are a new concept, billed as a simpler and more accessible way for communities to set out their priorities and preferences for their area, which must be taken into account by the Authority when preparing their Local Plan. We are told that this is to incentivise neighbours to consider the potential for development.

Neighbourhood Plans remain and communities looking to control the amount of their development in their area through a Neighbourhood Plan may be disappointed however, as the Bill provides that Neighbourhood Plans must not result in the development plan for the wider area proposing less housing that it would otherwise have done".

3. *The Draft Island Planning Strategy has been 'paused' in light of the changes to the NPPF published shortly before Christmas (i.e. 'exceptional circumstances').*

The minimum number of houses to be built on the Island each year is determined by the government's algorithm. A local authority may, however, use an alternative method (e.g. a housing survey) if it is able to demonstrate exceptional circumstances.

Paragraph 61 NPPF states: "There may be exceptional circumstances, including relating to the particular demographic characteristics of an area, which justify an alternative approach to assessing housing need; in which case the alternative approach should also reflect current and future demographic trends and market signals". Footnote25: "such particular demographic characteristics could, for example, include areas that are islands with no land bridge that have a significant proportion of elderly residents".

It is essential, in my opinion, that we have a planning strategy that delivers housing that Islanders both need and can afford, without over development, particularly on greenfield; overdevelopment threatens our quality of life and our tourist economy. I agree that we need to have a current planning strategy in place as soon as possible; however, it has to be the right strategy for the Island. It has been suggested that we should submit the DIPS for approval by a planning inspector and then change to EC. This is not possible. As a matter of law, the DIPS would have to be recalled, redrafted to include EC, and subject to R.18 and R.19 consultations. Further, it is far from certain that we would be permitted to recall the DIPS. Spelthorne DC sought recently to do so and the Minister of State intervened.

The pausing of the DIPS will enable the correct strategy for the Island to be determined.

4. I was asked by Cllr Thomas Cowley, at the last meeting, if I had taken part in the 'school playing fields' consultation both in my capacity as a member of YTC and as ward councillor. I have checked my emails and I have not specifically written as ward councillor, I did, however, take part in the YTC consultation. I have written to the IoW Council pointing out that by taking part in the YTC consultation I was acting as both Town and Ward Councillor. I think, however, that they were already aware of that.

Cllr Farrell wondered if the Neighbourhood priorities statements were nearly enough the same as the neighbourhood plan. Cllr S Cowley commented that further information was necessary and suggested contacting James Brewer of IWC to address a future meeting.

A member of the public asked about restoration of trees in the car park which Cllr Spink was investigating, and the Clerk reported that he'd been in touch with the IWC Senior Tree Audit Officer on this issue and was waiting for a response.

iv) LOCAL ISSUES

Deputy Mayor Head reposted that a new PCSO had been appointed for the West Wight and the Clerk informed that he had been in contact with the PCSO and awaited a response.

Cllr Farrell asked if the Clerk could maintain a log of local issues and publish it each month, and the Clerk agreed to do this.

Mayor McCleary reported that she was still pursuing the re-establishment of the Yarmouth Business Association with a view to promoting local businesses. Cllr S Cowley indicated that a couple of local business properties had been re-leased at lower rents, indicating that rents charged in the past are no longer sustainable in the present economy.

Deputy Mayor Head reported that Philip Black had been very pleased with his gift and card in recognition of his litter clearance activities in Thorley.

v) PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Jill Cowley spoke about the forthcoming 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings on 6/6, explaining that the thrust of commemoration activities should be based around education, in accordance with the National Curriculum. She was firmly of the opinion that all activities should be centred around CHOYD and spoke of the need for co-ordination. She proposed organising a team to map the original householders in the town from 1945 and announced her intention to publish a book of residents' recollections from that period. Cllr S Cowley urged the lighting of the beacon in accordance with the initiative which has been promoted by the King's Pageantmaster. The Mayor asked June Ring to report back to YTC after CHOYD had discussed these proposals. Cllr Farrell urged that local restaurants promote the sale of fish and chips that day.

143/2023 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor	Personal	Pecuniary
G Head	British Horse Society RSPB	National Trust Bowcombe Estate
A Ingram	Shalfleet PC	
D McCleary		The Piano Bar
S Cowley	Yarmouth Town Trust Shalfleet PC Wight Nature Fund CHOYD	Lee Farm Item 112/2023.1
P Farrell	RSYC	

144/2023 MINUTES AND CONFIRMATION OF ACTIONS

It was proposed by Cllr Cronin, seconded by Cllr S Cowley to take as read and confirm as accurate the minutes of the December monthly meeting held 5/12/23.

145/2023 FINANCE

145/2023.1 Payment of Accounts

It was proposed by Cllr S Cowley, seconded by Cllr Cronin and agreed unanimously to approve payment of the following accounts for January:

BACS234084	G Head	Gift Philip Black	£19.65
BACS234085	West Wight Men in Sheds	Grounds maintenance	£100.00
BACS234086	Jessica Flynn	Refund toilet admission	£0.60
BACS234087	B Jacobs	Clerk's salary and backpay December	£1,432.51
BACS234088	CHOYD	Annual office lease	£1,400.00
BACS234089	ICS	Public toilets cleaning	£708.33
2389	J Allen	Mayor's Award	£140.00
DEB	Post Office	Office post	£15.60
DEB	Pay by Phone	Car park charges	£4.95
DEB	Microsoft	Office 365	£3.00
DEB	GiffGaff	Office phone	£6.00
DEB	HMRC	Clerk's salary and backpay December	£500.49

145/2023.2 Bank Reconciliation

The financial statement for 31/12/23 was noted.

145/2023.3 Budget 2024/25

The latest iteration of the Budget was reviewed. Cllr S Cowley asked about the implications of making the toilets free, and the Clerk responded that it would cost YTC some £5K in lost income, a sum which covers the loan costs for the new units. Cllr Farrell suggested setting the admission charge to make the toilets self-supporting, but the Clerk responded that it would be necessary to increase entry costs to 60p which would be impractical and widely resisted. It was decided to defer discussion about an increase to next year's Budget.

As the precept hadn't been increased for 3 years, and with unknown expenditure likely to arise in 2024/25 due to acquisition costs of the school site and the proposed neighbourhood plan, it was proposed by Cllr S Cowley, seconded by Cllr Farrell and agreed unanimously to increase the precept by 8%.

146/2023 PLANNING ISSUES

New applications

It was RESOLVED to make the following comments:

23/02067/ADV - No objections

23/02157/FUL – Object on basis of over-development of site and concerns about the stability of land in this area.

The following were noted:

Applications granted:

23/01693/HOU

23/01806/LBC

147/2023 YARMOUTH SCHOOL COMMUNITY ASSET

Cllr S Cowley reported that IWC advised an update from the selling agents was due shortly. An online meeting was due between IWALC and the IWC Cabinet in the next few days and he had tabled a question as to when a decision would be made on the School site disposal. In the meantime, the site is deteriorating.

148/2023 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr S Cowley proposed inviting James Brewer of IWC to a forthcoming meeting to explain the concept of the newly-launched neighbourhood priorities statement and its comparison to neighbourhood plans, and the Clerk was asked to arrange this.

149/2023 HYP PROJECT PLAQUES

Cllr Farrell presented the following report:

Yarmouth

The 3 sites agreed for Yarmouth are: the George Hotel, the Old Tide Mill (Thorley Mill) and Refuge Lane (plaques to be mounted on the side wall of Towers). Agreement in principle has been reached with the owners of each site through Kevin Shaw - subject to seeing the designs. Costs from AJ Wells for manufacture of the three plaques:

- Size of the current Outer Gate Plaque (694mm x 608mm) would be £2010 - preferred size.
- Size of the Inner Gate (420mm x 297mm) costs would be £1074.

Lead time from ordering to delivery is estimated at 6 weeks. The plaques can incorporate QR codes and AJ Wells can retrofit QR codes onto the existing Plaques.

The three designs have been completed now by Kevin Shaw. Additional costs for installation and marketing are estimated at £1000 (NB £500 was spent on marketing in 2012).

IWC Planning (Danielle Massey) requires pictures of the current plaques, proposed new designs, sizes, materials, content and also the intended sites/buildings that they will be mounted on. NB All 3 of these sites are Grade II listed. (The George is Grade II* listed). This means that IWC Planning (+ Conservation & Design) are required to obtain approval from Historic England as part of their own approval process. Planning costs and estimated timeline have been requested from IWC - not yet received. (NB Planning costs in 2012 were £1000). Overall costs for the Yarmouth sites are, therefore, £2074 and £3010 depending on which size plaque is agreed on, plus Planning.

QR Codes - these would provide a significant enhancement to the effectiveness of the plaques in communicating the history of Yarmouth to interested visitors. They can be generated at little or no cost and they can be incorporated onto our plaques and retrofitted onto the existing plaques. The key issue is creating a site with significant content for them to link with. Kevin Shaw has agreed in principle to lead on this but sees it as a separate, medium term project. This element will incur costs TBD.

Thorley

The objective of the Thorley element of the project is to further promote knowledge of Thorley “Old” Church, plus Thorley Manor, and also the fact that Thorley was the location of the earliest landing place or port in the area. Thorley Old Church is a Grade II* listed building; it is believed to have been decommissioned. It’s a substantial building but there are significant issues with the roof and an Owl Box which means that open access to the public is not currently possible. Malcom Peplow and Andrew Johnson (part time Church Warden) both have keys and will admit people on request. Public access to the churchyard around the Old Church is via a public footpath from the main road. The entrance to this is on the main road in the middle of an ‘S’ bend where there is no lay-by nor a pavement or grass verge. The footpath is cleared twice yearly by Public Rights of Way, IWC. Malcom Peplow has been cutting the grass in the churchyard but is doing it less these days.

Thorley Manor is now a private residence. The owners (Caroline Sheldon) are supportive of our project but do not want anything that would encourage visitors to enter their premises. There is now no official public access to the Old Church through their yard. This was closed when the public footpath was re-routed some years ago. There is no visible evidence remaining now of a port area nearby.

These issues were considered at the December YTC meeting and it was agreed that, initially at least, the current lectern situated at the junction of Thorley Road and Broad Lane should be replaced or refurbished. Replacement costs for the structure, estimated by Jason Richie in Wellow, are £1200-1500. The content has faded and needs to be replaced. Using a plaque similar to the Outer Gate in Yarmouth would be £873. Installation of the overall structure is estimated at £300. Total c.£2500 plus any planning costs. Replacement is likely to require Planning approval from IWC and also, possibly, Highways, which could increase the planning costs considerably.

In view of these potential costs Gill Head agreed to assess, together with her husband, the possibility of refurbishing the current lectern.

Next Steps

- Complete the package required for IWC Planning & Conservation and Design and submit it asap.
- Meet the owners of the buildings in Yarmouth with the now completed designs to obtain their final agreement for plaque installation.
- Decide on a solution to the Thorley lectern.
- Seek potential contributors

There followed some discussion about the condition and orientation of the Thorley lectern.

After some discussion, Cllr Farrell agreed to circulate copies of the proposed plaques among Councillors.

The Clerk was asked to chase up Brighstone Landscaping for a quote to lay a substrate by the 2 pedestrian access gates. The contractors trimmed the eastern boundary hedge in November and are waiting for suitable weather to restore the path to the cycleway. Basket swing RoSPA and the Environmental Officer have questioned the need for and additional safety chain, which was also picked up in the last RoSPA report as being a medium risk. The Clerk was asked to seek clarification from the Environmental Officer as to what is required.

Cllr S Cowley asked about the bearing on the roundabout. Cllr Cronin reported that it was still operational though not running smoothly. He would arrange remedial work when the weather was suitable, and see if it would be possible to obtain new bearings at a reasonable cost.

The Clerk reported that mole clearance was about to commence.

Cllr Ingram asked about the replacement pavilion but there had been little further progress.

151/2023 TREES AT CAR PARK

The restoration of the dot trees removed from the car park when it was last resurfaced was discussed, and the Clerk reported that he had emailed the Senior Tree Audit Officer about it and was awaiting a reply (discussed above).

Cllr S Cowley informed that YHC was due to discuss a row of trees along the northern perimeter of the car park.

152/2023 THORLEY CHURCH WALL

Councillors discussed making a grant to Thorley Church for repair of the church wall. It was proposed by Cllr Head, seconded by Cllr Ingram and agreed unanimously to grant £500 towards this, to be paid on completion of the work.

153/2023 WIGHT NATURE FUND MILL COPSE MANAGEMENT PLAN

It was noted that the Management Plan had been approved by the Forestry Commission. Cllr S Cowley explained that it involved a 10 year coppicing plan and removal of dying ashes and inappropriate conifers.

The Clerk was asked to notify the Environment Agency about a damaged deep water warning sign along the side of the footpath which runs alongside Thorley Brook between the Cyclepath and Yarmouth Mill.

154/2022 CLERK'S REPORT

154/2023.1 FREEDOM OF TOWN

It was proposed by Cllr S Cowley, seconded by Deputy Mayor Head and agreed unanimously to award Freedom of Yarmouth to John Calcutt in recognition of his award of a CBE for his national fundraising activities.

154/2023.2 LIGHTING OF THE BEACON 24/6

The King's Pageantmaster has asked that beacons should be lit on 6th June 2024 in commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy, and all Councillors were in favour of this. It was accepted that CHOYD should be involved and June Ring will report to YTC when the Trustees had discussed this; also schoolchildren should be encouraged to participate, and the unofficial Town Crier approached to officiate. This issue will be discussed further next meeting.

155/2022 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence received since the last meeting was noted.

156/2022 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

D-Day celebrations

Trees

Historic plaques

Mole control

157/2022 MEETING VENUES

To confirm the venue for the next meeting – CHOYD 6/2/24.

Signed..... (Town Mayor)

Date.....